

Keeping in Touch K.I.T.

Our Aim: To know Christ and make him known No 81: Spring 2015



THE WEDDING CUP

MAYBE the question we should start with is why John, in his gospel, chose the setting of a Jewish wedding to introduce us to the ministry of Jesus Christ?

In New Testament times if a man wanted to marry someone, he first had to discuss the matter with the potential father-in-law. The conversation between the bride's father and the groom would revolve around at least two things.

Typically the groom and the bride would come from similar status groups. However if one of them came from a higher status group, then the person with the higher status group would lose status and the lower person's group would gain status.

The second point of discussion would be the dowry or price paid for the bride. Throughout the New Testament Jesus is described as the Groom and we know that he paid a dowry for His bride, that's you and me. And unlike other grooms who typically attempted to negotiate the price down, Jesus paid the highest price possible – His own life.

The groom had to make his intentions known to the future bride in front of other people. This often took place in the form of a meal between the two families, and he would pass her a cup of wine. This gesture represented the question, *Will you marry me?* If she took the cup and drank from it that meant she accepted the proposal and that would signal a permanent commitment to their relationship.

God invited Jesus to pay the dowry by sacrificing His life for us by using the same marriage imagery of the drinking of the cup. Notice how it is put in Matthew 26:42: ***He went away again the second time and prayed, saying, "My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done."***

Suddenly 1 Corinthians 10:21 also makes sense. Notice what it says: ***You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot be partakers of the Lord's Table and of a table of demons.***

So Jesus is making the statement here that you have to make a choice between whose cup you are going to drink from, because you can only drink from one. You cannot be betrothed to two grooms at the same time. You cannot celebrate a consummated wedding at the wedding tables of two different grooms.

At this table today, is an invitation to accept the cup from Christ who admits that when you drink from this cup you will share wholly in his life, in his suffering and joy, in his faithfulness and in his kindness, in his goodness and gentleness. And it is the table where when your number comes up, Christ your groom steps up and says, *Father I paid the dowry for him. Father, I paid the dowry for her.* So will you take the cup this morning?

Once the cup has been accepted and drunk from they were betrothed and betrothal was much stronger than today's engagements. It could not be broken and the only way out was through divorce.

The young women could also reject the proposal by not taking the wine, resulting in an end to the relationship, so in order to seal the betrothal not only did the future bride have to take the cup, but she had to drink the wine and the future groom had to pay the dowry. Then the preparations for the wedding day began and they had to live separately during this time while the groom would go and prepare their living quarters, typically a room or rooms in his father's house. The person who determined when the room or rooms were satisfactory, and the bride could be fetched for the wedding day, was the father of the groom.

It makes perfect sense then when Jesus said in John 14:2-3: ² ***In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*** ³ ***And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.***

Suddenly Jesus' words in Matthew 24:36 also makes sense when he said: ***But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.*** Dear friends the cup is on the table, will you take it today? In Matthew 26:29 Jesus is making a pledge to you and me that if we take the cup today He would be faithful by not drinking of the cup until the wedding feast in heaven: ***But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.***

Taken from a sermon by Pastor Jacques Venter

KIT Puzzle - Who wrote this?

WHY will you do without Him?
Is He not kind indeed?
Did He not die to save you?
Is He not all you need?
Do you not want a Saviour?
Do you not want a Friend -
One who will love you faithfully
And love you to the end?

Why will you do without Him?
The Word of God is true.
The world is passing to its doom,
And you are passing too;
There may be no tomorrow
Shall dawn for you or me,
Why, will you run the awful risk,
Of all eternity?

If you know who wrote this thought-provoking poem, please let one of us know.

The Cup that really Cheers - Richard J B Willis MA, MSc, FRSPH

MANY euphemisms for the experiences of life involve the word cup: the cup that cheers; cups of kindness, bitterness, indignation, and so forth; the devil's brew, etc. Most refer to short passing events whether they be noted as *highs* or *lows* in one's life. Since many cups of beverages, wines and spirits contain mood-altering drugs and system's-changing chemicals there is obviously a close link between the substance drunk and the vessel in which it is conveyed to the body. Additionally, there is a psychological association -- sharing and good times bring back memories of people and places.

There are harmless alternatives, such as herbal infusions or fruit juices. A close reading, for example, of the original words for wine show that the Bible is not supportive of an alcoholic lifestyle since many of them refer simply to new wine or grape juice (freshly-pressed). To keep the wine safe and non-fermented to drink whilst travelling, the grape juice could be transported in well-sealed jars, or rendered to a syrup to be reconstituted when required by the addition of clean water. Bearing in mind the physiological and psychological associations already referred to, we might, in the words of the poet Robert Browning, say, *My times be in Thy hand, perfect the cup as planned*, The shared cup in the Kingdom really is the cup that cheers.

KIT Flashbacks to 2014

ON NOVEMBER 23, eight talented music students gathered near Hyde Park for the *Austrian Cultural Forum* competing for the judges' prize for their piano playing and also the Audience Prize. Our **Minyoung Bae** was one of them and she not only won second prize from the judges, but also the Audience Prize. We congratulate Minyoung on her success. The photo of Minyoung was taken by June Coombs.



We lost four of our number in 2014. **Damaris Huzzey** died on October 31 after a brave struggle against cancer. We were so sad to lose such a lively young woman.

Amanda Powell's mother Audrey passed away peacefully on Sunday, December 14.

Eric Colledge, who used to worship with us, died on December 20 at the grand age of 94. **Olive Archer** a much loved member of the church died on December 30. We send our sympathy to all those who will miss them dearly.

On December 6, in another way, we lost **Sheila Sinclair** to Crieff Church. Other transfers were more cheerful. We added **Richard and Doreen Gayle** from North Wembley Community Church; **Beatrice Dan** from Castellon, Spain and **Harriet Cudjoe** from New Life Church in London. We say a sad farewell to Sheila and welcome to all our new members.

The Prize Giving for our second *Co-operative Food Stores Annual Primary Schools' Christmas Art Competition* took place on December 15. Children from nine schools took part. There were three winners aged 4-7 years old, and three aged 8-11 years old.

THE TOY SERVICE (taken from an article by June Coombs)

Back in the mid-1950s **Lionel Davison**, the head elder at Ealing church suggested to his church members that they should donate toys for needy local children at Christmas time. This started the annual toy service at that church..... The baton was passed through **Alf Kelly** to our church, where the event has been an annual fixture in the church calendar for more than half a century.... Since his death, the tradition has been continued by his daughter **Pat (Walton)**.

The current elected **Mayor of Watford, Dorothy Thornhill**, has attended many of these services. ..This past year braving a bad cold and the frost outside, she told how for her the event always marks the beginning of Christmas, *It is not a civic duty but a pleasure*, she said.

Maintaining the connection with Lionel Davison, his widow **Marjorie** was present on December 13 along with their son **Brian**, three grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, who are all regular worshippers in what is now their *home church*.

In the first picture, Dorothy Thornhill is shown with Pat and some of the church's children. In the second picture, Marjorie is seated in front of Brian. To his right are his daughter **Emma Stickland** and her son **Luke** and daughter **Sara**. To his left are Brian's son **Ben** and daughter **Estelle Elias** and her son **Benjamin**. In front of Ben Davison are his daughter **Abigail** and **Estelle's daughter Eleanor** and in front of them, Abigail's brothers **Christopher** and **Zachary**. Dan Sabatier took both photos. Sadly, on March 14 we heard Marjorie had died. I'm sure her family will treasure the time she spent living closer to them all.



The Pearl of Great Price also quoted by Pastor Venter.

ONE OF THE shortest recorded parables told by Jesus is found in Matthew 13:45-46.

⁴⁵Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, ⁴⁶who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

This is what Ellen White in Christ's Object Lessons has to say about this parable on p. 118:

The parable of the merchantman seeking goodly pearls has a double significance: it applies not only to men as seeking the kingdom of heaven, but to Christ as seeking His lost inheritance. Christ, the heavenly merchantman seeking goodly pearls, saw in lost humanity the pearl of price. In man, defiled and ruined by sin, He saw the possibilities of redemption. Hearts that have been the battleground for the conflict with Satan, and that have been rescued by the power of love, are more precious to the Redeemer than are those who have never fallen. God looked upon humanity, not as vile and worthless; He looked upon it in Christ, saw it as it might become through redeeming love. He collected all the riches of the universe, and laid them down in order to buy the pearl. And Jesus, having found it, resets it in His own diadem.

NEWS, NEWS, NEWS!



ON JANUARY 10, we celebrated the dedication of a beautiful baby girl, by **Pastor Paul Clee**. **Hana Rebekah Swain** is the daughter of **Joanna and Carl** shown with her in the photo by **Dan Sabatier** who also took the pictures of the Toy Service and the Pathfinders.

Usually KIT, with pages meant for younger readers, is produced by a team of about eight of us. If you want to know who we are, often our names appear at the end of the newsletter. We are ably supported by the pastor who writes the editorial, Frank Blewitt who unscrambles any problems I encounter; **June Coombs**; **Billie Dragojevic**, **Gwen Olney** and **Sheila Stickland**. Lately, the BUC News editor **Victor Hulbert** congratulated June, writing that she was *the most prolific Adventist contributor to local news media in the UK*. June's articles have also appeared in world Adventist magazines and frequently in *Messenger*. Often she takes the pictures that accompany the articles. As far as KIT is concerned, it would be hard to produce it without June's help.

January ended on a high note with an Indian Meal and Auction, organized by **Kish Poddar**. It raised £2000 for S.T.O.P. - Save The Orphans Please - and supported projects at four orphanages. The volunteer waitresses were photographed by June Coombs.



The Pathfinder and Adventurer Investiture made February 7 a delightful Sabbath. What made it very special for me was that they sang *The King is Coming* an old favourite of mine. On Sabbath, January 10, our Pathfinder Club gave God the praise and glory after they were judged to be the best Area 7 team in the Pathfinder Bible Experience. Breaking news! Yesterday, February 7, the team were judged the best in the conference. Our congratulations to their director, **Florence Allen**, and of course the team.

Cupid's been busy as we have two new engaged couples in the church. **Faith Karin Allen and Joseph Ngondo** hope to marry on August 30 at our church. Hopefully we'll find out the plans of **Charlotte Rashleigh and Matthew Marshall** by the next KIT.

The Soup Run needs blankets, sleeping bags and man's clothing. The Welfare Department needs tins of soup, vegetables and fruit, plus pasta and pasta sauce. Please contact **Pat Walton** on 01923 672500 if you can help. These days times are hard for many - even in Watford.

In the next KIT we hope to have a photo of **Jared de Bruyn** our current student volunteer. Jared hails from South Africa and will be here until early next year.

Hopefully you'll get KIT in time for Easter. If so, please remember the wedding cup Jesus drank for each one of us.

HAVE A LOVELY EASTER

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